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ADDRESS
IN COMMEMORATION OF THE LIFE AND SERVICES
OF
CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.



WILLIAM EVERETT



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THOMAS HILL, D.D.,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY.

THE GIFT OF HIS CHILDREN.

4 January, 1892.

ADDRESS

In Commemoration of the Life and Services

OF

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS



ADDRESS
IN COMMEMORATION OF THE LIFE
AND SERVICES
OF
CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

Delivered in the Stone Temple at Quincy

4 JULY, 1887

BY
WILLIAM EVERETT

CAMBRIDGE
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University Press
1887

4 January, 1892.

From the Library of
THOMAS HILL, D.D.

PROCEEDINGS
IN THE TOWN HALL OF QUINCY.

AGREEABLY to a call published in the Quincy "Patriot," a meeting of the citizens was held Saturday evening, Nov. 27, 1886, in the Town Hall, to take appropriate action on the death of our noted townsman, Hon. CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

The meeting was called to order By Hon. William A. Hodges, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, and Col. Charles H. Porter was elected chairman; and Warren W. Adams, secretary.

Short addresses on the life, character, and ability of Mr. Adams were made by the chairman, R. F. Clafin, Esq., E. W. Marsh, Esq., Charles A. Foster, Esq., Luther W. Anderson, Esq., Theophilus King, Esq., and Dr. William Everett.

The following resolutions offered by F. A. Clafin, Esq., were read and adopted:—

WHEREAS, in the providence of Almighty God, our fellow-townsmen CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS has been removed from this life, be it

Resolved, That we the citizens of Quincy hereby declare our high appreciation of the exalted worth of him who has been taken from us ; that we here testify to our sense of the loftiness of his mind, the purity of his heart, and the nobility of his character ; and be it

Resolved, That we his townsmen note with mingled pride and gratitude the valuable services that were rendered by him to his country both at home and in other lands, insuring for himself a distinguished position in the annals of diplomacy and of successful international arbitration, a high and honorable place in the history of his own nation, and a permanent seat in the affections of his countrymen ; and be it

Resolved, That we here express our full and thankful recognition of his devotion to the cause of the American Union, to his love of liberty exemplified in his zealous labors in behalf of human freedom, standing up nobly in early and vigorous resistance to the aggressive spirit of the upholders of that system of human slavery which so long cursed our land and which he did so much to destroy, showing himself in this and in every other part of his long career to be in patriotic impulse and action a worthy son of noble sires ; and be it

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased.

Upon motion of Mr. R. F. Claflin, it was voted that a committee of five be nominated to make arrangements for a memorial service and a eulogy of Mr. Adams. The meeting selected the following gentlemen: Messrs. R. F. Claflin, Everett C. Bumpus, Edwin W. Marsh, Luther W. Anderson, and Charles H. Porter. The meeting then dissolved.

The committee appointed at a meeting of the citizens of Quincy to arrange a memorial service in honor of the late Hon. CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, selected Dr. WILLIAM EVERETT to deliver the eulogy, and determined to hold the services in the Unitarian Church, Quincy, July 4, 1887. The following is the programme which was then carried out:—

- I. ORGAN VOLUNTARY.
- II. HYMN *Temple Quartette.*
- III. PRAYER *Rev. D. M. Wilson.*
- IV. RESPONSE, "Lift thine Eyes," *Temple Quartette.*
- V. ORATION *Dr. William Everett.*
- VI. HYMN *Temple Quartette.*
- VII. BENEDICTION *Rev. D. M. Wilson.*
- VIII. ORGAN POSTLUDE.

P R A Y E R.

O THOU the Father of men, the Guide of nations! whose ways are manifest in the perfect order of the worlds and in the perfect love to thy children, we would commune with thee. We would invoke thy blessing upon this present occasion; we would ask that thy spirit enable us worthily to cherish the great memories which we are met here to revive. We believe them to be memories of events which lead to the lasting peace of nations, and memories of the deeds of men which lead to the establishment of righteousness. Thy purpose we

behold in the progress of humanity, thy promises of great good in every ideal of the soul of man; especially at this time do we seem to see the fulfillment of thy will in that which this day commemorates,— the birth of this nation; and the revelation of thy promises in the hopes we cherish with regard to the future of this people. A spiritual intent and a spiritual power are visible in it all! And, great God! how nobly were we established a nation! How great the wisdom of the fathers of it! How complete their self-sacrifice! May we imitate their virtues and worthily enjoy the great inheritance they have transmitted to us! We would also be uplifted by the remembrance of what has been achieved for us in these later days; we would dwell with an understanding mind upon the self-denying efforts, the unflinch-

ing devotion, the sacrifices to the death which preserved us a nation, and sanctified before the world the principles of liberty and justice. His faithfulness would we appreciate whom we are to honor in this present hour. In the great part he played in that terrible scene in our nation's history, how steadfast his patriotism, how high his wisdom, how clear the nobility of his character! May we ever value such services! May they inspire us to be dutiful at all times; may they awaken in us greater love of country! To recognize and appreciate true greatness, how fine a gift is that! May it never fail from among us! May we exalt moral worth above riches; may we follow after it and find in it our real life! Like the great whom we honor, may we seek to do thy will, and not to obey caprice and passion. May we seek after

righteousness, and so further the coming of the kingdom which thy Son announced! We pray thee, bless all in authority; may they be endued with wisdom and inspired by justice! Bless our country; may peace abide in it, and prosperity attend its course! Everywhere may thy love be made manifest, and thy laws obeyed! And to thee may we ever ascribe praise and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

ADDRESS.

AS we open this sacred house for public services on this venerable day, bright in the natural lustre of the season, brighter still with the glories of history, it yet receives us for an office of mourning. It recalls to us another day at the gloomiest time of year, when, under a lowering sky, we opened it for the funeral services over our fellow-citizen, to whom we mournfully bade farewell as the first in our own community, mingling with our tears a glow of pride that he was second to no citizen of the United States. The Fourth of July is the

great day of national rejoicing. We select it this year to pay the last tribute of affection and respect to one who had the traditions of the Revolution entwined with the very fibres of his nature, and without whose personal service and sacrifice, equal to that of life itself, the work of the fathers might this day be extinct. It is right that in this town the day of the grandfather's death should be the day of the grandson's solemn memorial.

Our ears are hardly at rest from the salvos that pealed on the thirtieth of May over the graves of those who bore arms for their country in the war for the preservation of the Union. The whole nation accepts that memorial day; and North and South agree — nay, let us rejoice that they even unite — in casting flowers on the soldier's sepulchre. But who shall say that the debt of grateful

commemoration is paid if the heroes of the field are alone remembered, while no tear and no flower falls on their tombs, the heroes of the council, whose wisdom, whose courage, whose devotion sent forth and sustained those soldiers, and who upheld our honor in the senate and before the world? They wrought under burdens of toil, of anxiety, of calumny, of treachery, that might have bowed the proudest head and torn the stoutest heart. Those statesmen to whom we looked for counsel, as we looked to our soldiers for valor, — nay, to whom we looked for counsel and valor too, — they are gone. They began to fall as peace returned; and they fell faster and faster, till, for many years before his death, our friend and neighbor whom we commemorate to-day was the sole survivor.

We talk of the ravages of war; but at this day there are surviving far more of our heroes in the field, our soldiers and sailors, than there are of our counsellors and our orators. You will not blame me for reminding you of that blow which, on the night that completed our conquest of the Atlantic coast by the capture of Fort Fisher, carried off him whom you honored as I did for always speaking the word that would stir the charity as well as the patriotism of America. He did not see the war ended; and no sooner had that end come, than his brothers in counsel fell thick and fast. Lincoln and Fessenden and Grimes and Sumner and Andrew and Wilson and Stanton and Chase and Motley and Seward and Starr King and Bellows, and a score of others have gone to join the ranks of the warriors whom they

sent forth to a soldier's grave. One by one our fellow-citizen saw them go; year by year he felt himself more and more alone; and soon we saw that the toil he had borne by their side had wrought its inevitable work on his heroic soul. The shadow gathered upon him: we saw it, like those of a June sunset, gently drawing closer and closer round him; we waited in hushed respect for the close; we laid him down with appropriate rites of the simplicity that he loved. And now are we come together, his own neighbors and townsmen, not a few of us his very kindred, to pronounce a tribute of honor in no wise differing from that which we give to his ancestors of the Revolution and his comrades of the war with the Union,—the honor due to the counsellor and the patriot, whose very life was given to his country.

It is our duty at once and pleasure to pay such a tribute. The retirement in which he had lived for many years has made it proper for his fellow-citizens elsewhere to withhold such commemoration as their feelings would naturally dictate. But Quincy could not fitly allow any circumstances to check the flow of her affection and respect. Although born outside our limits, he was in other respects our own, — ours by blood, ours by residence, ours by public service, ours by close acquaintance and unshaken trust. For nearly forty years Quincy has made the proud boast that she, and she alone of all the free communities that compose our nation, is the mother and the sepulchre of two Presidents; and when that boast was conceded, and men went on to ask what had become of their race, — had

the stream of their generous blood sunk in the ground?—Quincy could show within her borders a third scion of the stock, in all respects worthy of his name and breeding,—worthy to carry on the labors of his fathers; worthy to tread in their path of honor; worthy to have reached the height they attained, if the nation had known how to accept the gift that Quincy gave it.

Yes, we must commemorate him. And let me say here, once for all, that while no one feels more than I do the dignity and honor of this service, no one can feel more entirely how little competent I am to act as your spokesman on this day. I trust I value, as all Americans must, the invaluable services that he rendered to us. I have had some chances not given to others to know what was his character and temper, and to

honor them as they deserved. But I cannot speak as one of you; I cannot give words to that keen interest which the very oldest of you felt in him from his childhood, changed to deep personal regard when he became one of you by residence, as he already was by race. If, therefore, my words to-day seem to you feeble,—if there is something lacking to them which your own hearts feel you could say if you stood where I do,—remember, while you forgive my imperfection, that the deep and tender emotions belonging to such knowledge never can be expressed in words; least of all, perhaps, by those who feel them most. Committing to a stranger the task of telling what all the world should feel, lock up in your deep breast as a dear treasure the peculiar legacy, which is yours and

yours alone, of such faithful and unutterable knowledge.

And whoever speaks to-day should speak in absolute truth and simplicity. The character which we commemorate is one that needs no explaining or qualifying; it stood out clear and unmistakable; and anything like artifice, anything like attempting by device of words to interpret or gloss it into other than what it seemed, would be as alien to the man himself as to your feelings. I shall tell you what I and you and all know, not as setting off shifting traits by artificial lustre, but as carving plain words on material firm as these granite walls.

Charles Francis Adams was the third son of John Quincy and Louisa Catherine

Adams. He was born on the 18th of August, 1807, in Boston, where his father then resided at the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets. That same name of Boylston is attached to the stately building now occupying the same site, and is derived from honored ancestors of the Adams family, who were among the early settlers of Brookline. At the time of Mr. Adams's birth, his father was a Senator of the United States, and also Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory on the Boylston Foundation in Harvard College; but exactly at this time he had felt it his duty to approve the embargo policy of Mr. Jefferson's government, in direct opposition to the Federalists of New England, and especially to his neighbor and life-long friend, your illustrious fellow-townsmen, the late Hon. Josiah Quincy. Failing of a re-

election to the Senate, Mr. John Quincy Adams resigned his seat for the short remainder of the term, and in the year 1809 was appointed by President Madison the first minister of the United States to Russia. He embarked with his wife and infant son on the 1st of August, but was not destined to reach St. Petersburg till the 22d of October. Here the family passed five years; and our friend's earliest recollections were of Russia, at a time when that singular country was much less known to Americans than Japan is now. The Emperor Alexander was fond of having long and friendly conversations with the American minister when they met in their daily walks. On one such meeting the Emperor addressed some talk to Charles, then but four years old, greatly to his consternation, as he in

later days liked to tell. After a residence of five years in St. Petersburg, Mr. Adams was transferred to the special mission at Ghent, and ultimately to that in England, which his father had held before him, and his son was to hold after him. Here Mr. Charles Adams was placed at a private school at Ealing, a short distance from London. I have heard that he had to maintain his country's honor here against the English boys, not by diplomacy, but by absolute fighting. However that may have been, he records himself in his diary that his school-days were the most desolate period of his life. The private boarding-schools in England, to which boys are sent in preparation for Eton, Westminster, Winchester, and the other great public schools, have always been spoken of, at least up to a very recent date,

by every one who has ever attended them, as offering a combination of all the miseries and temptations to which boys can be exposed, from meanness in the governors and vice in the pupils; and there is every reason to think they were at their worst in 1816, especially for an American.

The election of Mr. Monroe brought Mr. Adams home as Secretary of State, and Mr. Charles Adams entered the Boston Latin School, becoming ultimately a student in Harvard College, where he was graduated in 1825, at the early age of eighteen. His class list shows many distinguished names, among whom are living the venerable Frederic Henry Hedge and Charles Knapp Dilaway; while among the deceased we find Seth Ames, Charles Henry Davis, Horatio Greenough, Augustus Addison Gould, Sam-

uel Kirkland Lothrop, John Langdon Sibley, and Sears Cook Walker, — all men exceptionally well known in the community; and many others of the class were of more than ordinary prominence. Nor do we find a less striking array in the classes right and left of him from 1821 to 1828; the college annals then were illustrated by a very brilliant galaxy of divines, scholars, and statesmen. Yet Mr. Adams did not speak of his college life in after times with satisfaction. He esteemed it unprofitable, — it might have gone hard with him to say why. Harvard College was in a transition state. Her teaching force, which had been recently enlarged, comprehended several brilliant, enthusiastic, progressive men, who were intimately acquainted with the methods of foreign universities. They were rather incongruously joined with

many of the old school, who were satisfied to have things go on as in their own early manhood; or rather believed that to have been, as in its day no doubt it was, the time of progress and enthusiasm. From this unsympathetic union in the government, or from whatever cause, arose uncomfortable relations with the students; a rebellion, the most serious of all that ever were in the college history, broke out, and several young men, whose social connections made them conspicuous, were obliged to leave college, receiving no degree for many years after. Such a period is always a perilous time to those who have not superior age and exceptional motives to make them work. A very young man may maintain his character through it; but unless he be exceptionally attracted by the studies, or driven

to work by the spur of poverty, he will hardly be made a student in a college distracted by rebellion. Mr. Adams was young in college; his early residence abroad had given him many advantages over his fellows; his circumstances were far above the necessity of hard work. As the result, he spoke of his college course in after life as a waste; though we may doubt if so sensitive a conscience as his did not unduly depreciate his exertions and their consequent profit. Certainly Mr. Adams's studies in after life, and the whole tone of his mind, showed the influence and effect of a college education, nor did he hesitate to adopt it for all his sons. There are indeed many instances where graduates of our ancient college declare that there was something wanting at the time when they were under its training; but when the hour comes

to choose for their sons, it is rare that the spirit of loyalty to a mother fails to send the children where the fathers were trained.

During Mr. Adams's college course, his father became President of the United States, and about a year after his graduation his venerable grandfather died, — sixty-one years ago this day. These events naturally brought all the members of the family prominently before the country. There is a tradition that General Lafayette, being at the White House in 1825, warned Mrs. Adams of the danger of bringing up her sons in the belief that they were to have some superior claims on the nation as sons and grandsons of Presidents. It is safe to say that Lafayette, who, with the purest and loftiest of souls, was not the most far-sighted of men, very little understood the temper of

the coming generation of Americans. Undoubtedly, Mr. Adams attracted his fellow-citizens' attention as the son and grandson of Presidents; but he declares emphatically in his diary, at the time when he occupied a most enviable position in the State Senate, "Strange as it may seem, the distinction of my name and family has been the thing most in my way." Few things are more peculiar and perplexing than the way Americans deal with the hereditary principle. The idea that the son of a public man has a right to inherit his father's or ancestors' power and rank has been solemnly rejected in the United States; it has been stamped as infamous in more than one State Constitution; and if this government were, what the Constitution framed by the elder Adams declared it ought to be, a government of laws and not of men,

we should never think who were a man's parents. But every government that ever existed on earth is a government of men,—by the law when it suits them, against the law when it does not suit them; and the hereditary principle, the idea of breed, is one that humanity cannot get rid of, in spite of all democratic or socialistic or philosophic constitutions to the end of time.

The American people, like every other people that ever lived, cannot help looking with interest to the descendants of their great men; they cannot help hoping to see their fathers' virtues revived; and if they followed out their generous instincts, whether Saxon or Celtic, they would love, no matter what the law was, to see the sons occupying their fathers' places. They very often will have it so; the natural confidence that like

begets like overleaps the solemn renunciation of unnatural pedants or envious socialists. But Americans are afraid of their own impulses; they are in awe of these solemnly enunciated maxims; they do not dare to think that Mr. Jefferson can have been mistaken; and so when they see themselves likely to trust a man for the sake of his name and blood, they hedge round the preference with all proper republican and democratic distrust of aristocracy. They carefully inform the descendant of the heroes exactly what his ancestors' virtues were, what his duty to their memory demands, what they would have had him do, as though he were wholly ignorant on such points. And while thus sedulously explaining to him what a load of ancestral duties is entailed on him, they remind him carefully that an American

has no ancestral rights; that while his blood or name may set him on a compulsory pinnacle of notoriety, he need not suppose that it entitles him to any confidence. It may be safely asserted that thousands, not to say millions, in the United States, as soon as our friend's existence was known, agreed in thinking it would be his duty to put himself in competition for the Presidency, as successor to his ancestors, and at the same time their duty to prevent his ever succeeding them in it.

At all events, Mr. Adams did not immediately make any effort to enter upon that political life which seemed to have a hereditary claim upon him. Shortly after the end of his father's presidency, on the 3d of September, 1829, he was married to Abigail Brown, youngest daughter of the Hon. Peter

Chardon Brooks. Of this marriage there have been five sons and two daughters, of whom four sons and one daughter are living, and ten grandchildren surviving out of twelve. Affectionate respect for the living forbids our doing more than name this connection as the source of overflowing sympathy and support through every happiness and every care.

Mr. Adams was admitted to the bar, but was not engaged in active practice, partly owing to that singular sentiment among us which keeps law business out of the hands of wealthy men's sons, and then blames them for living on their fathers' income. But Mr. Adams was never idle; he was fond of literature, an untiring student and reader; and he possessed two elegant tastes which afford endless food for one of keen and

delicate perceptions. He was a collector and student of coins,—that peculiarly fascinating line of research which teaches art and history at once as no other can,—and he had a lively and cultivated musical taste, going again and again with undiminished delight to the best performances, vocal and instrumental. After the fourth or fifth hearing of the opera of “Sonnambula,” he says in his diary, “I shall remember the moments spent in hearing these notes as the pleasantest of my life. How far superior to low rooms and dark consultations for political arrangements!” But he was eminently a man of books,—a reader and a writer. In neither department was he so all-devouring and unremitting as his father, who would seem never to have laid his pen aside. But he loved to read; he loved to study, and he

loved to put down the thoughts to which his studies gave rise. His literary taste was that of the period when he was born, — that of which Edmund Burke was at once the most eminent cultivator and the highest model. He loved the classics, — meaning by that word not merely the Latin and Greek classics, but those few picked authors, in all languages and times, which by the attraction of their style and the elevation of their sentiments have taken their place as models in literature when their contemporaries have been forgotten. He loved those works that deal with man, — his story, his nature, his prospects. History, ancient and modern, biography, politics, mental and moral philosophy, poetry, and the more refined and elevated works of fiction, were to him a never-failing source of occupation and de-

light. He did not neglect the tale of art and adventure; but he cared little for the great developments of natural science, nor did he love modern speculations in theology. He found interest and work enough in following out such lines of thought as the ablest minds with which he was acquainted had laid down for him. He did not wish either to read or to write what was crude and uncomposed, for the sake of some supposed originality of thought or audacity of speculation, which might turn out after all to be new, merely in that it had been said long ago and deservedly forgotten. His range of reading may appear narrow, and his style of writing austere; but he would wait long for a critic, if none criticised him but those who knew more or could write better.

Engaged and happy in these pursuits,

Mr. Adams was reluctant to mingle in political strife. But it could hardly be avoided. His father's position in Congress from 1830 on, made it inevitable that he should watch the contests with the administrations of Jackson and Van Buren most seriously. His very first contribution to political literature exhibited that absolute independence of mind, and refusal to bow to party dictation, that he maintained to the last. He ranked with his father as a Whig. But in 1834, when Mr. Webster took ground against General Jackson's removal of his Secretaries as an invasion of the rights of the Senate, Mr. Adams had the courage to oppose him with a pamphlet, for which he borrowed from Burke the title, "An appeal from the new to the old Whigs," contesting Mr. Webster's views of the right of removal from office, and declar-

ing that it vests under the Constitution in the President alone. This view, although unpopular at the time from Mr. Webster's paramount authority, and rejected by the Senate in its contest with President Johnson, is now generally recognized by statesmen and sanctioned by the courts. Mr. Adams followed up this pamphlet in 1837 by others on the currency, also attacking Mr. Webster's views. They exhibit precisely the political temper and style of his later years.

Mr. Adams's fellow-citizens of Boston were early attracted to him as a suitable representative in the Legislature; but what he had seen of public life—the “mud of politics,” he calls it—gave him no reason to desire the nomination, and he declined it. It was repeated in 1840 and accepted. President John Quincy Adams had no idea that

any citizen had a right to refuse such a place if his fellow-citizens wanted him. Accordingly our friend was for three years in succession a member of the House of Representatives, and for two years a Senator from Suffolk County, at the last of these elections standing first on the poll.

Of this occupation he wrote emphatically, "I pursue politics as a duty, not as a pleasure." The ordinary legislation seemed to him petty and wearisome,—a drudgery which he did thoroughly, as he did everything, but with little or no mental spring. But his fellow-citizens were amply satisfied, and planned higher things.

It was about this time that Mr. Adams came to live among you, building and occupying the house which stands just below his son's on yonder hill, in a position of unsur-

passed loveliness. He was thus able to be within call of his venerable parents during the recess of Congress. At first averse to a country life, he soon became passionately fond of it, and delighted to watch all the phases of opening and withering Nature. It is not for me to tell of all the services he rendered to you in the forty years of his stay here, broken only by those absences when your hearts followed him; enough that he became as true a Quincy man as any of his ancestors, back to the settlement.

Mr. Adams counted in the Legislature as a Whig. The Whig party had formed itself out of a variety of elements; and when the immediate grounds of their coalescence,—opposition to General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren,—had passed away, causes of difference appeared between its older and younger

leaders. Mr. Adams, as was natural in his father's son, did not place entire confidence in the principles or the judgment of some of the great Whig chiefs. But he was always true to the Whig principle, as he understood the meaning of the name. That name meant more to him than it might to a less thoughtful and less cultivated man. In his view the Whigs of 1836 and 1840 were the direct descendants of the Whigs of the Revolution,—of Burke and Fox in England, of James Otis and Josiah Quincy in America. It was not merely for a protective tariff, or a National Bank; not merely to repeal the Sub-treasury Act, or defeat the Expunging Resolution, that Mr. Adams was a Whig. The maintenance of the people's will as expressed by their representatives against all executive encroach-

ments; the ultimate recourse to the people themselves when both executive and legislature proved recreant; the constant doctrine that liberty is at the basis of all Anglo-Saxon governments, and that the interests of the whole nation are beyond any local demands, — these principles, which belonged to Sidney and Russell, to Locke and Somers, had been handed down from them through Camden and Chatham to the men of the Revolution; and they were Mr. Adams's views in 1842 exactly as they were John Hampden's in 1642. The question of putting these principles to one practical application after another was the issue constantly before him; and no party expediency, no popular name could make him call anything Whig which was not really so to him. His political career, at its most energetic period, was acting

out the title of Burke's pamphlet which he had borrowed for his own, — "An appeal from the new to the old Whigs."

Towards the close of President Tyler's term, the pressure became strong for the admission of Texas into the Union. The Massachusetts Whigs were indignant at what they felt was an outrage to law, whether municipal or international, and to freedom, whether American or universal. Mr. Adams, in the Legislature of 1845, drew up the resolutions which protested against the admission. It seems to me this is a very remarkable paper, which may be read, after the lapse of more than forty years, absolutely without party feeling. It declares that the right to admit foreign states into the Union is a power never delegated by Massachusetts to Congress, and hence that

it remains with the people, and can only be exercised in such manner as they shall appoint. The last resolution is this:—

“Resolved, that the people of Massachusetts will never consent to use the powers reserved to themselves to admit Texas, or any other State or Territory without the Union, on other terms than the perfect equality of freemen; and while slavery or slave representation form any part of the claims or conditions of admission, Texas, with their consent, can never be admitted.”

It was very soon after this that Mr. Adams felt that the Whig party at the North was becoming insensible to the encroachments of slavery, and that it was absolutely necessary to arouse its slumbering conscience. He had hitherto acted as a warm opponent of all such encroachment, but it was in the party and not outside of it. He had not ranked as an Abolitionist

or a Liberty man, or a supporter of Mr. Birney. He had desired Mr. Clay's election in 1844. But now he felt that something must be done,—that the regular Whig organs would not do what he wanted. There came into his soul the old question and answer of the king of Israel and the prophet,—“‘Who shall set in order the battle?’ and he answered, ‘Thou!’” Mr. Adams himself became the chief proprietor and editor of a new paper called “The Whig,” for the express purpose of maintaining what he believed to be the true Whig sentiments on the subject of slavery. His labors in this work,—a work for which he had not had the least training, and which contained no single congenial element, except that he was reasonably ready with his pen,—were enormous; they can be understood only by reading his

diary at the time. To say that he performed them under discouragement is no word. He deliberately endangered, nay, sacrificed the closest intimacies of his familiar circle, the confidence of his oldest political associates; he disregarded utterly the whims, the prejudices, the traditions, the tastes of hundreds of acquaintances, who could not comprehend the whole business from beginning to end. All party discipline, all social fastidiousness, all mercantile expediency, united to throw cold water, or rather *aqua fortis*, on such a scheme, — the absurd idea that the head of his legislative ticket in the winning party of the state should set to work and deliberately risk, not to say advocate, its division, on such a question as the creation of a few more slave states in the South. Self-seeking politicians probably

rejoiced that a candidate so terribly in their way had deliberately wrecked his prospects for advancement. But many men as disinterested as Mr. Adams himself could not understand why he should throw away his chances of the highest usefulness. They used — I know they used — that very common argument, that he could have done so much more good by staying where he was, and using his influence for freedom inside the party lines.

Friends, I am not here expressing my own opinion: the opinion of one who was only six years old at the time is of little value now. It is worth while to consult the journals of the time for the opinion held of Mr. Adams by his contemporaries. Worth while, I say; for the story is seldom told correctly now by those who look back

over forty years, and crowd together their memories of events that reached over a third of the time. If I said now what I was taught to say then, I should not be likely to please many of those by whose request I am here.

There is no need of reviving controversy. The dissensions in the Massachusetts Whig party of 1846, which went far beneath the political strata down into the very depths of social intercourse, are remembered by fewer and fewer persons every year, and their history must soon be got from documents alone. But the part which Mr. Adams took in them arose from a habit of thought, a temper of mind, a principle of action which was his own,—not exclusively, but shared by very few in the history of statecraft. Many find it impossible to

believe that this principle ever can be made an habitual rule of action for the majority of political men. Mr. Adams believed in doing what is right because it is right. He believed in national morality; in ordering and guiding our legislative and executive and international relations by the rules of conscience, as the loftiest and sternest authorities on that subject have settled them; by the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, or by any higher revelation that the God of Righteousness may have yet in store for mankind. He looked up to the great documents by which liberty and government in England and America have their boundaries indicated,—Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States,—as weighty, venerable,

authoritative, but as possessing all these qualities because, as he believed, they were in harmony with precepts of a more awful gravity and more eternal authority. I have no doubt that Mr. Adams has again and again had quoted of him the celebrated line which Goldsmith, too partially as I think, uttered of Burke, — “Too fond of the right to pursue the expedient.” Mr. Adams would have answered to this, that any man who drew any distinction between the right and the expedient, or who thought there could be any expediency except that which was right, was simply short-sighted, to say no worse. He would have said it was merely a question of time; and that what was maintained to be right by the minority now, would in time be maintained to be not merely right, but necessary, by the majority,

after all experiments with so-called expediency had failed.

It was in accordance with this idea of right that Mr. Adams guided his political, or extra-political, way from 1845 to 1848. His path might be hard or easy, popular or unpopular, successful or unsuccessful. It might be among friends or among enemies, or it might be nearly or quite alone. He might be listened to, applauded, attacked, neglected: his great anxiety was that he should be heard. His only question to himself was, "What is right?" or rather, "What is right for me? How do I read my own duty in the light of my training and my conscience?"

In 1844 Mr. Adams was one of the most popular leaders in the State; in 1846 it was far otherwise. His venerable father died in February 1848, and that event wrought

more changes than one in his life. In the same year he accepted the nomination of the Free Soil party as Vice-President with Mr. Van Buren for President. This acceptance subjected him to every conceivable criticism, serious or sportive, friendly or malignant, directed alike at his principles and his judgment. It was all one to him. He believed himself to be in the right. He entered into the contests of that year with an eagerness, a passion even, like that of his grandfather, — a passion hardly to be credited by those who saw him only in his later day. The election passed; it ended, as he doubtless expected, in defeat; and he retired to his comparative obscurity as calmly as he had left it. His new party was not content with the position in politics he had wished it to assume; it entered into alli-

ances, it advocated measures which he could not approve; and he said so. He addressed his fellow-citizens against the proposed Constitution of 1853 as unhesitatingly as he had against the nomination of General Taylor. Neither the majority party nor the minority party could make him go with it one inch beyond what he believed to be right. Accordingly when the Republican party, of which he was destined to be a shining star, was organized in 1855, it was not immediately that Mr. Adams was drawn from his retirement and placed as a leader of the growing sentiment of the North. It was not till 1858, ten years after the death of his father had made a vacancy in your district, that your fellow-citizen was called to be a Representative in Congress, which of all political positions was most completely that of his choice.

No congress ever met in the United States at a more distressing period than that which was organized in December 1859. The civil war had not yet come; but the storm-clouds had gathered; they were growing blacker and blacker, and sinking lower and lower, all charged with the electric excitement that was ready, as soon as the fatal links were once connected, to burst in the lightnings and thunders of war, and descend in the showers of sorrow. The air was heavy and sultry in the hush before the storm. Throughout the first session little or nothing was done. Mr. Adams was waiting with the rest, — acquainting himself with the strange unnatural life at Washington and with the leaders of political opinion all over the country, who had met at its centre to review their forces for the coming

Presidential campaign,— a campaign which they felt would be serious as none ever was before. That North and South must come into collision, that the clouds must break and dissolve, was the feeling of many in both sections; others hoped that a vigorous wind might arise, from one or another quarter, to blow the darkness all away and leave the heavens clear. Mr. Adams had no question of the duty of the Republican party to present an undivided front to the various sections of its opponents; and he had no doubt who should be selected as standard-bearer. His conviction had been growing for many years that Mr. Seward held more completely than any public man the key to the situation,— that he alone had the penetration, the knowledge, the energy, the probity that were now required to steer the ship of state

through storm or sunshine into still waters. Retaining his own absolute independence of mind, his own unflinching convictions of the right, to which anything like dictation was impossible, Mr. Adams yet looked to Mr. Seward as a leader, with a confidence and a loyalty that were as cordial as they were sober. It was undoubtedly a serious disappointment to him when Mr. Lincoln was nominated; yet he unhesitatingly joined his leader in a campaign trip through several states in behalf of the successful candidate.

After the election, whereat he was himself re-elected to Congress, Mr. Adams returned to Washington. The first clap of the storm was at hand. Before Congress had sat three weeks South Carolina seceded, and several other states followed in rapid succession. Yet some held off, and their representatives

were still in Washington, joining in all the proceedings of Congress. The Cabinet was rapidly disintegrating; President Buchanan thoroughly unnerved and helpless. Mr. Lincoln was at his home, and had given no definite indications of what policy he would pursue. The representatives of the victorious party had none of them realized the tension of the political atmosphere; and when the storm finally burst, they were scarcely able to meet it with decision. They were ready to do anything and everything to save the Union; there was no want of patriotism; there was little violence and much soberness; but, alas! very few of them, even in this terrible hour for the nation, could throw off the notion that patriotism meant party, and that party meant office. The all-important question what they should do in

the few weeks that yet remained to President Buchanan had its answer obscured and distorted by the other question, what they should be under President Lincoln; and so all their councils became uncertain and vacillating. Nor must it be omitted that many of them, though they were more disinterested, were even less discerning, and could not be persuaded, any more than their opposing brethren at the South, that the most fanatical sentiments should not be pushed to the most violent action.

Mr. Adams went to Washington neither as an office-seeker nor a fanatic. He believed in the Constitution and the Union, and he did not see any reason why the North should renounce them because the South had done so. It was precisely because he had taken the ground of no com-

promise in the days when very few stood by him, that he understood now the need of conciliation better than many who had lately come over to his party. He was placed on the great House committee of thirty-three to devise some plan for restoring harmony between North and South, and he did most efficient work, eager for every honorable chance of reunion. But when, emboldened by the mild temper of the Northern statesmen, the violent Southerners advanced overweening demands for the guarantee of slavery, he told them to their faces that he would even give up the Union rather than adopt such a reactionary policy in the nineteenth century. He afterwards addressed the House on the 31st of January, reviewing the critical situation "in a speech of very great ability, which produced a marked

effect on both sides.”¹ But it was too late for any one man to hold back the South.

Among all Mr. Lincoln's duties after his inauguration, none was really more pressing, though perhaps few people understood its importance than the selection of ministers to foreign nations. In ordinary times, especially since communication by cable has become established with the Old World, a foreign mission is regarded as a pleasant reward, perhaps an honorable exile, for one who has done good service to his party. Our envoys have little to do, and that little not arduous. It was not so in the spring of 1861. The great powers of Europe really held in their hands the decision whether we should remain one nation or become two,—however humiliating such a phrase may

¹ Diary of Edward Everett, who was present.

sound to the proud spirit of either North or South. If England and France stood by the United States as a friendly people struggling only with an internal rebellion, there was little hope for secession. If they accepted the assertions of the Southerners, and recognized them as an independent nation, we could not expect them to endure a long war for reduction without interposing. The astute politicians of the South knew this well, and had filled Europe with their emissaries, in hopes to induce all foreign nations, but especially those two, to accept the South's valuation of her rights and wrongs, her position and her prospects, and in the briefest possible time declare the Union dissolved. Our existing envoys in England and France had no sympathy with Mr. Lincoln's party, and were ready to return the very instant

their successors came. For a pause, however short, in diplomatic relations, the Southern envoys were waiting, to thrust into the crevice some word that might fire the train of confusion before the new ministers could close the chink. It was of the first importance that the United States should have at the Court of St. James exactly the right man and no other. Mr. Adams had of course been named for many places in the new government. He wanted none. He preferred to be in Congress. He preferred that mixture of freedom and power which belongs to a seat in the House of Representatives as perhaps it does to no other post in the country. A place in the cabinet had no attractions for him, and less he could not be offered at home; nor was his confidence in the new Administration as a whole

quite solid. But he readily accepted the mission to Great Britain, and sailed as soon as practicable in May 1861. His passage was not very short, and on his arrival Mr. Dallas waited just long enough for his own final audience and the opening one of Mr. Adams; and our friend was plunged at once into the vortex of the hardest diplomatic complications which the United States had had since the treaty of 1783. To this was added what seems trivial in comparison, but was of itself enough to confuse any man, — the task of finding a decent roof over his head and a protection for the archives of the legation, in the height of the London season, with its crowded houses and high rents.

The feeling of the English upper classes at the very outset of the war had not been

on the whole unfriendly to the North, as I know of my own experience. They really believed that they hated slavery, and that the day of complete emancipation had dawned. But they hated a powerful and united democracy still more, for the very reason that they hated slavery: both happened in that day to be un-English. If a man like Mr. Adams, or one like Mr. Lowell, had represented us in January 1861, there might have been a different turn given to English sympathies. But Mr. Dallas, with the most courteous and honorable feelings, was not the man to stem the subtle current of Southern intrigue; and almost at the very instant that Mr. Adams stepped on the dock at Liverpool, Lord John Russell,¹ as Lord Palmerston's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had decided to

¹ Not raised to an earldom till a few months later.

grant belligerent rights to the Southern Confederacy. The ground assigned for action so precipitate, when a new envoy was known to be on the water, was that the British navy would be in danger from piratical Southern cruisers with no proper means of self-protection! That some such step would have to be taken sooner or later no sensible Northerner has ever denied; but the extreme and unnecessary hurry of it, without waiting to hear from that one of the two parties on whose side were all the presumptions, showed that if ever there had been sympathy for the North on the part of the British ministry, it was rapidly turning to coldness, and would soon become hostility,—although at present there was ostentatious profession of neutrality between North and South.

Mr. Adams thus found himself with two entirely different tasks to perform: the one to grapple with the actual cases of wrong against the Law of Nations, where redress can be obtained only by the personal protests of a minister, since there is no sworn and paramount tribunal between peoples. This was an arduous, often a hateful task; it required unceasing vigilance, energy, courage, courtesy, firmness, and patience; but at least it was the legitimate work of Mr. Adams's office. The other task was equally arduous, even more hateful, requiring every one of the qualities I have named, — and it was not the legitimate work of a minister. This was to bear up against the growing coldness of English society, particularly in the very highest circles, towards the North; the undisguised wish for our failure; the sneers,

the taunts, the delighted dwelling on every news of defeat, the studied depreciation of every victory, — a conduct such as no American minister had experienced in London for forty years, and utterly at variance with all traditions of diplomacy and of England. It was not merely that many had transferred what sympathy they had to the South, — a feeling of aristocracy might account for that; it was not that their daily and hourly remarks and questions showed that their knowledge of the United States was about equal to their knowledge of Siberia; it was not even their astounding change of front on the slavery question that an American felt to be galling and stinging: it was the supercilious tone of patronage that habitually treated the most tremendous national struggle since the battle of Leipsic as a kind

of blustering sham-fight, such as we hear of after a South American election. I have myself been told, for instance, that not a thousand real Northern Americans were taking part in the war, but that some hundred thousand hired Germans and Irish were supplementing a little fighting by many retreats and boundless pillage. I know of my own personal observation that such talk, veiled with the thinnest gauze of civility, was rife in the circles where Mr. Adams should have been and afterwards was greeted with all true English heartiness; and I am amazed to-day at the dignity, the patience, the tact with which he bore himself throughout, and positively wrung from those unwilling circles a tribute of profound admiration for sustaining his part exactly as they of all men would have had it sustained.

In the actual task of diplomacy, where Mr. Adams had to come directly in contact with the British government, he found, as I say, neutrality between the belligerents ostentatiously proclaimed and reiterated. Though constant efforts were made to compel a different course and have the South recognized as a nation, there was perhaps no great chance of such an act. It would have been too bold for Lord Palmerston's government, which was feebly maintaining itself only because any other would have been still feebler. Few of its members knew or cared anything about the American question. Mr. Gladstone, who is second to no one in vigor of intellect and eagerness for the rights of man, showed his absolute misapprehension of the whole matter in a speech which the American people have hardly to this day consented to

forget. Lord Palmerston, the head of the government, still at the age of eighty the most magnificent of English schoolboys, still after fifty years of office the most flippant of statesmen, had no really deep views on that or any other question of true politics in the high sense of the word. He was only anxious not to lose his office, or a certain half serious, half jocose regard entertained for him among that large section of Englishmen which admires any one who habitually comes uppermost out of a fight. He would do nothing directly to break the neutrality; he would do nothing at all to maintain it; and to Mr. Adams himself, the direct opposite of him as far as a gentleman and a diplomatist could be, he did all he could to forfeit both characters. Earl Russell, the Foreign Secretary, with whom Mr. Adams was directly

in contact, was a man of far higher aims and keener conscience than his chief, but greatly his inferior in tact and penetration, and above all in the art of keeping his temper. He really wished well to the North, if we would allow him to patronize us and tell us how we ought to manage. There were several points of resemblance in character between him and Mr. Adams; there was even, as I have myself heard remarked in England, a certain resemblance in stature and bearing, and they very soon found themselves drawn together in social regard, although as officials arrayed against each other in bitter controversies.

To recount the very names of these controversies would be to reproduce much of those bulky volumes which contain our Diplomatic Correspondence in the war. I

commend you to the reading of these; their unattractive appearance and technical language are forgotten in ten minutes, from the absorbing interest of the matter. There were every week a score of annoying points that called for discussion, for explanation, for remonstrance, and for protest. There were intrigues from the Southern emissaries, hasty steps taken by our own consuls and officers, instructions, peremptory yet unwise, from our own State Department, hampered as it had to be by its imperfect knowledge and means of communication, and necessarily having its point of view in America and not in Europe. All these troubles from friend, foe, or so-called neutral, Mr. Adams encountered thoughtfully, patiently, vigorously. But the chief trouble was of a special kind.

The weak point of the Confederates was in their intercourse with other countries by sea. Their good harbors were few, and most of their roadsteads dangerous. The Northern blockade, scoffed at in the beginning as one of paper, soon proved to be of efficiency really marvellous, when we consider the extent of coast to be guarded and the short time in which we had to create our navy. The South were eager to create a navy of equal vigor, consisting not merely of blockade-runners for getting the cotton out and supplies in, but of fast cruisers to cripple our commerce, and rams to destroy our vessels of war. They felt that if all these objects could be conspicuously attained, their own recognition by Europe must speedily follow, and that the achievement of any one of them would be a terrible blow. The

first object, that of setting blockade-runners and minor corsairs in motion—such vessels as the Nashville, the Oreto, the Florida, and the Sumter—was soon achieved; and though the blockade was in general firmly maintained, it was broken quite often enough to give some basis for the loud Southern boasts of its inefficiency. Although in many cases these cruisers undoubtedly had their origin and found harbor in Great Britain, the evidence of breach of neutrality was hard to obtain, and the mischief was done long before the utmost promptness on Mr. Adams's part could check it. Such slighter successes prompted both sides to greater energy, whether to equip or to detect the pernicious armaments.

It was in the early part of 1862 that Mr. Adams received from Mr. Dudley, our con-

sul at Liverpool, striking evidence that a vessel was constructing in the dockyards at Birkenhead of a suspicious appearance and designation, giving indications that she was built for a ship of war, and intended for the use of the Confederacy. Mr. Adams pressed upon Lord Russell the demand for her detention as an object of suspicion. The evidence was referred to the law officers of the Crown,—the proper referees, no doubt, but men of no transcendent professional eminence, and likely to move with just that amount of vigor and rapidity that would be acceptable to the head of the government. They pronounced the evidence of a breach of neutrality insufficient. Mr. Adams collected and submitted fresh testimony; it passed into the same hands, but it was announced that the Queen's Advocate

was indisposed. The government of Lord Palmerston, which would not have hesitated to let a sergeant-at-law sit on the bench if a judge was ailing, could not think of hurrying the inquiry by commissioning an assistant to Sir John Harding; and by the time that these deliberate men had determined that there was evidence sufficient to detain the vessel on suspicion of an attempt to break the neutrality, warning had come to the mouth of the Mersey, the work had been pushed, and the "290," but half ready, had steamed away on a pretended trial trip. On the 31st of July 1862 word came down to detain her. She had gone! passed out of sight,—and in a few weeks reappeared as the *Alabama*.

These events, and the correspondence connected with them, made a profound sensation

throughout the United States and Europe. It was felt that no assistance was to be obtained from the British government in enforcing the feeble acts that guarded neutrality, except by the collection and presentation of absolutely overwhelming evidence, driven upon them with the most stubborn energy. It seemed that the Confederates were always to have the benefit of every doubt. The government at Washington entirely declined to admit that that of Great Britain was not responsible for the depredations of the *Alabama*; it would not listen to the plea of the limited range of the Foreign Enlistment Act, or the necessary delay in consulting legal authorities; it asserted that where the commerce of a friendly country was at stake, the municipal law of England should be reinforced so as to fulfil the demands of

the Law of Nations, and the legal advisers of the Crown urged to the utmost promptness. Mr. Adams, under instructions from Mr. Seward, again and again urged our claims for compensation, as the news came that vessel after vessel had been plundered and burnt by the Alabama. He was instructed to press these demands oftener perhaps than his own judgment would have warranted; but he did press them, and it is doubtless in great part owing to his persistent refusal to abandon the claims that they proved at last successful.

But the South, excited by the escape of the "290," became bolder in their demands on the dockyards of the Clyde and the Mersey. They derived some encouragement from a debate in Parliament, in which the remonstrances of William Forster, who, what-

ever some of our fellow-citizens may think of him, was always the gallant and unflinching friend of America, were met by the subtle pleading of the Solicitor-general, and the insolent boasts of the builder of the Alabama, both received with cheers by the House. Soon Mr. Adams received information of new and serious attempts to destroy our navy, by constructing gunboats in the port of Liverpool. The evidence collected against one called the Alexandra was so cogent, and was accompanied by such new and startling proofs of the supineness of the officials in the case of the "290," that Lord Russell saw that if England would not forfeit her old lofty claims of justice and conscience forever, she must act with decision and firmness; and within a week from the time of Mr. Adams's despatch the orders came to detain the Alex-

andra. At last the vigilance, the energy, the persistency of the active consul and the intrepid envoy had prevailed, and America began to take breath from her constant dread of these ever-swarming hornets of piracy.

There can be little doubt that Lord Russell had been aroused to a feeling that he had at least mistaken the situation, by daily and hourly proofs that the sneers of the aristocracy did not express the feelings of the English nation as a whole. Ever since the Emancipation Proclamation the great middle class, the bone and sinew of England, had been gathering in popular meetings, and transmitting emphatic expressions through Mr. Adams to Mr. Lincoln of their profound sympathy with that side which stood arrayed for freedom against slavery. Lord Russell's own flippant comments on this

great manifesto, exactly resembling many other hasty utterances of his public life, met with no response in the intelligence and conscience of a great and free people; and Mr. Adams went about his arduous work in the terrible year of 1863 with the feeling that Providence was rapidly arraying on his side a power that no English minister would dare to disregard.

The hardest struggle was approaching. In the month of July, 1863, while the case of the *Alexandra* was under postponement, a vessel was launched from the Alabama's dockyard, not like her, only half-equipped and of equivocal character, but obviously and defiantly a vessel of war of the most formidable description then known, and bearing abundant indications that she was built to make havoc with the United States' navy.

Mr. Adams called the attention of Lord Russell to her in a despatch whereof the profound gravity, almost solemnity, of tone is never assumed by public men except when an undercurrent of volcanic indignation is struggling against the rock of prudence and the ice of diplomacy. It was written on the 11th of July 1863. Remember that at that hour the news of Gettysburg and Vicksburg had not reached England.

The information so sent, and speedily followed by new evidence, could not be slighted. Attempts were made to throw dust in the eyes of the Crown by the gratuitous falsehood that the ram was building for the French Emperor or the Pasha of Egypt: there were those in Liverpool who would have sworn she was intended for Julius Cæsar or Alexander the Great if that would

have served their turn. The government paid some attention to the evidence; but the preparations went defiantly on. Mr. Adams had determined to steal a few weeks in Scotland from his work; but his anxiety followed him everywhere. On the fourteenth of August, in the same tone of serious warning, but more briefly, he pressed upon Lord Russell the impossibility of so trifling with a great international crisis. The weeks went on; the work went on too: a second iron-clad was launched, and the first was ready for war. Again on the third of September a direct and pointed remonstrance was addressed to Lord Russell, enclosing evidence more cogent still. Mr. Adams followed it the next day with still further evidence, "begging your lordship's permission, in the name of my government, to record this last

solemn protest against the commission of such an act of hostility against a friendly nation."

Scarcely had this most grave paper been despatched when a note was received, dated the first of September, answering at once all the evidence and protests of July and August, asserting that her Majesty's government considered the evidence presented to them of the hostile purposes of the ironclads insufficient, and declining to interfere. This was too much. The last protests had obviously not been received, but the cup was full; there was a point beyond which the indignant suffering of months could not be repressed. Mr. Adams on the fifth of September addressed a note to Lord Russell of which some phrases have passed into history. Expressing his profound regret at

the conclusion to which the government had come, he regards it no otherwise than practically opening to the South free liberty in England to execute a policy described in their own journals; namely, the bombardment and destruction of the defenceless cities of the North. "It would be superfluous in me to point out to your lordship that this is war. No matter what may be the theory adopted of neutrality in a struggle, when the process is carried on in the manner indicated, from the territory and with the aid of the subjects of a third party, that third party to all intents and purposes ceases to be neutral." He adds in the most austere and short, but in the most dignified and emphatic manner, the impossibility of any nation's submitting to a continuance of relations so utterly deficient in reciprocity;

ceases his demands for interposition, and refers himself to his chief at home.

It is not to be supposed that Mr. Adams enjoyed writing such a letter. Lord Russell, in his elaborate reply, says he has read it with regret. Mr. Adams in his rejoinder declares that such could not exceed the regret with which he wrote it. Scarcely had it left his office, when he received an answer to his notes immediately preceding, informing him that the Queen's government still had the evidence as to the rams under its most serious consideration; and in transmitting this correspondence to Mr. Seward, he declares that had he received it earlier, he should have held back his own note of the 5th; "feeling, as I do, the heavy responsibility that must devolve upon me in the conduct of this critical transaction, it is not my

disposition to say or do the slightest thing that may add to the difficulties inevitably growing out of it between the countries." In fact, the severity of his tone and the directness of his warning could not be overlooked, and letters were exchanged in a few days in which Lord Russell and Mr. Adams defended their respective views with much energy. But in the mean time the British government, thoroughly aroused, had on the 8th of September 1863 issued orders to detain the ironclads, — orders speedily followed up by still more vigorous proceedings, which ended in the transfer of those vessels to other than Southern hands.

The work was done. The sea bloodhounds' teeth were drawn. The vigilance, the patience, the acuteness, the energy, the courage of Mr. Adams had won his object.

The proverbial delays of English law, the reluctance of English lawyers to admit that anything in their procedure or statutes could be improved, the timidity of a tottering government, the indifference, the flippancy, the hostility of many whose support in Parliament Lord Russell had to court, the tricks and perjury of contractors, the subtlety of the Southern envoys, all had yielded to the steady pressure which the patriotism, the firmness, the conscience of one honorable statesman had brought to bear on the same qualities in another statesman as patriotic, as honorable, as conscientious, and happily not too firm to be insensible to justice and right. With this tremendous controversy, Mr. Adams's serious difficulties in London ended. Our cause was rapidly gaining in the field; the public voice of England was

rising in our favor, and the rest of his mission to the end of the war was fairly tranquil.

And now, fellow-citizens, do we appreciate all he did for us? I know we are grateful; we were grateful then, our gratitude is not dead. But were we, are we, grateful enough? Do we appreciate what it was possible, what it was probable would happen, if those vessels had been suffered to emerge, the precursors doubtless of many others; if a whole pack of bloodhounds had been scouring the sea, attacking and sinking our navy, annihilating our merchant marine, bursting the blockade, suffering the cotton to pour out and the supplies of Europe to pour in, arming, equipping, and what would be infinitely more fatal, nerving and cheering the Confederates, till they might have laughed even

at the battle of Chattanooga? Is it not possible, is it not probable, that on the first anniversary of our emancipation proclamation, another proclamation might have appeared headed "Victoria Regina," and declaring that Whereas certain states had successfully maintained their independence for nearly three years, therefore Her Majesty acknowledged the Confederate States of America to be in full and equal relations of sovereignty and national intercourse? All this might have been, had not he been there, to demand our rights from a reluctant power.

I see before me in numbers you who served our country in the field during the four years of civil war. Our graveyards are full of the loved remains of your comrades who fell in that struggle. For your patience

and your courage, your wounds and their deaths, our country is most grateful. She has shown her gratitude as no nation ever did before. The eulogies of your services are not exhausted; the rites of the thirtieth of May are not yet obsolete. And the pride you take in your own achievements is just; we would not strip one laurel from you. But think, I beseech you, where the bravest of you might have been, if Charles Francis Adams had not been where he was; if he had been where he was, and once faltered in his energy, once spoken a word too much or too little, once abandoned his post in despair, as for his own comfort he longed to do; once plunged in hot-headed enthusiasm, as too many of our champions were ready to do, beyond what facts and law warranted. If, as he stood there, literally facing

in his den that British lion of whom so much wild talk is held, literally laying his hand upon his mane, literally seizing his jackals by the throat, literally uttering the orders of a lord of creation,—if that eye had once dropped from its steady gaze, if that voice had once lost its firm tone, if that hand had once fallen by his side, and the dogs of war had been let slip, then you who are proud of your wounds and your victories on the Potomac and the Mississippi, in Mobile Harbor and in Southampton Water, might have had to fight for your own states and homes on the Connecticut and the Merimac, in Narragansett Bay and off Minot's Ledge!

Fellow-citizens, on this point at least I have a right to speak to you. I know whereof I am talking. I was in England

during the first two years of the war. I was one of that little company of Americans whose duty kept us in England, scattered, isolated, scantily informed, learning what was going on at home chiefly from garbled telegrams, not knowing what to believe, yet called to account for everything rash or foolish done or said to be done in North and South alike; sneered at, taunted, patronized, and forced every hour to fight the battle of our country's honor as truly as you who were in the regiments at home. You had your trials; believe me, we had ours. You were five hundred thousand strong; we were scarcely a fair-sized regiment, and scattered farther apart than the pickets of a whole army corps. You had the nation at your very backs; we were cut off from it by ten days of ocean. You had

those who took eager account of your triumphs and your disasters. We might bear tortures as acute as wounds or fever, and deal what blows we could, with none to note or sympathize. Yet there we fought, resolved that the name of America should not die in the land from which her founders came. And to him we looked as leader, as commander in our strife for honor; and none who fought under McClellan or Grant, under Dupont or Farragut, remember those heroes with more grateful devotion than that which we pay to the memory of Charles Francis Adams.

I wish I had time to tell you of the ways in which during those hard four years our friend rested and relieved himself; what delight he took in pictures and concerts; how he prosecuted his favorite study of

coins, one of the most refined and instructive in the world; how on Sundays his never-failing attendance at public worship carried him to a score of the charming churches that lurk in the labyrinths of London. Above all, I should love to dwell on the delightful hours he spent with those few staunch English friends of America who loved her because they knew her. There was no greater privilege in those hard days than to enjoy those friendships of which one hour consoled one for weeks of insolence, ignorance, and flippancy. I could not name them all. I have scarcely even time to mention the venerable John Bright and the illustrious Duke of Argyll, almost the last survivors of all who fought our battles. But I must be allowed to pay one brief tribute to the memory of one whom Mr.

Adams admired and trusted with all his heart,—Charles Lyell, standing on the pinnacle of scientific renown throughout the world, known as far as England or as science is known. No traveller to our shores knew us better. He had trodden with his own feet every stratum in our soil from the mould of the Mississippi to the cliffs of the St. Lawrence; he had sounded every chord in the heart of our people from Boston to St. Louis; and throughout those terrible years he fought our battles with the knowledge of an American and the courage of an Englishman,—our best friend, next to his own wife, enshrined for every charm in the hearts of all who knew her in England and America.

The triumphant close of the war, and the terrific shock of Mr. Lincoln's assassi-

nation found Mr. Adams thoroughly weary of his post, and anxious to return. Four years of absence from a beloved home are long enough for any man fifty-eight years old. Four years like those he had passed are more than enough for any man that ever lived. He earnestly desired his recall. But the administration of President Johnson knew the value of his services too well to assent to a change at such a crisis in our history. The first four years of peace needed to have the right man in England as well as the years of war; and his recall was not granted till the spring of 1868. Much as Mr. Adams longed, much as he needed to return, it cannot be doubted that there was a certain satisfaction in being in England after the war, and experiencing the profuse civility, nay the effort of cor-

diality, from a nation which, however wrong-headed in its theories, can see facts. The United States had undertaken a tremendous work; England declared they must fail: they had not failed; and however humiliating their success might be to the conceit of Englishmen, they endeavored, in their way, to acknowledge it, and not to sulk over it. I can testify from my own knowledge, that there was real amusement and solid satisfaction when one Englishman after another assured us that "he had always been one of those who were certain our side must ultimately triumph." For three years Mr. Adams remained in this position in England; honored by his country's triumph, honored equally for his own. He had conquered the respect of Englishmen,—a respect which however hard to secure is, when

secured, cordial and faithful; and if ever a stay in a foreign country could be agreeable when one wants to leave it, such would have been his from 1865 to 1868.

But he yearned to be at home; and at length his desire was granted. There was great eagerness, in that anxious presidential year of 1868, to learn his views on politics; and he was pressed, with friendly importunity, to utter them at once. But his habitual caution and desire to observe before he spoke, restrained him. He confined himself to occasional public addresses on festival days, when the old patriotic themes, never old to him, might receive new illustration from the events of the time, without political bitterness.

For Mr. Adams had lost all taste, if he ever had it, for such bitterness. He had

thrown himself into what he deemed the vital questions of the day with a young man's fervor at thirty; he had entered with a statesman's dignity into the tremendous practical problems of the hour at fifty. But now that he was over sixty, the calmness of the philosopher was not eager to wrestle with the detail of bringing the country to that prosperous repose which, if he had been heard, it never need have quitted. The trade called practical politics — the business, that is, of expending a public man's time every hour of the day in every sort of work except that for which he is specifically chosen — was even more repulsive to him than it is to most high-minded men, because he believed it to be entirely unnecessary, a waste as well as a misuse of time. Yet he saw this work spreading, more rife and

more relied on when the country held forty millions than when it held twenty millions, he saw the actual attention of the people not less given to great questions, because it was not given to them at all; absorbed in schemes of self-interest greater or smaller, in which he could not if he would bear a part. It was a research as unknown to him as it was distasteful; and the thought of the highest office, if ever there, had passed from his mind.

Yet he could not so easily pass from the minds of the people; his countrymen, who had been so grateful for what he had done, could not yet feel that he was to do no more. He had been so naturally thought of for the highest honors; he had been withdrawn from that race-course by such high motives; he had reappeared in it again

so simply, and he had done so much, so very much, to prove his right to be there, that even those who would have lost most by having him at the head of the nation, could not deny that his claim to that place was far beyond the ordinary politician's. His countrymen were eager at any rate to hear more from him; and their highest approval greeted the news, in the spring of 1871, that he had been selected as one of the Board of Arbitration, to sit at Geneva on the claims of the United States against Great Britain, established by the Joint High Commission at Washington. Mr. Adams accepted the call, and at sixty-four crossed the ocean again to do his country's work in a foreign city.

That was a striking body of men in which he sat. Count Sclopis, the courtly

representative of Italy, then the one constitutional and liberal kingdom outside England; Jacob Staempfli, the intrepid statesman of the ancient and honored European federal commonwealth of Switzerland; Viscount Itajuba, the genial and venerable delegate from the American empire of Brazil, met in arbitration with Cockburn, the jurist of England, and Mr. Adams, the statesman of North America. The three first named were all men of the world, all statesmen, all patriots,—all men profoundly impressed with the importance of this new Court of Arbitration, and of their own responsibility as members of it. It was a most dignified court. It was a most responsible duty. It was an attempt, made on a scale and in a manner never before known, to settle, by the calm judgment of men of sense and principle, the

sort of claims that had been wont to be decided by the sword, or not decided at all, and left to rankle for ages between great and jealous lands. America had patiently and firmly made her claim of reparation for every wrong done to her commerce by the Southern cruisers built and launched in England; and England had agreed to make fair compensation for the wrong, and adopt stricter rules for the future. Each of the two countries was to send its own representative, to be associated with the three eminent men above named in the strict duty of arbitration. There was no room on that board for advocacy or partisanship. Its principles had been laid down at Washington; the claims were to be advanced by such counsel as Caleb Cushing and William Maxwell Evarts. The work of the English and American

arbitrators was to show to their brethren from Italy, Switzerland, and Brazil, that even in the cause of their own countries men of English birth and English blood were capable of that cool, stern, and impartial love of justice which has often wrung respect for our race from those who have loved it least. Such was so completely Mr. Adams's natural character, that it is doubtful, if the whole Union had been searched through, whether a man could have been found better calculated to win the confidence of his brother arbitrators, and make them willing to hear his opinions where his own countrymen were concerned. The London "Times," whose views Americans insist on thinking of much more importance than they really are, but which then fairly gave the opinion of average Englishmen, declared

that Mr. Adams's efforts had alone saved the Treaty of Washington.

In fact, one would hardly think of talking about his calmness and justice, had it not been for the contrast presented by his fellow-arbitrator, the Chief Justice of England; a man of consummate acuteness, energy, and learning in the law of his own country,—perfectly capable, if he had chosen, to discuss an international question with the same fairness that he would one of English law; but who went to Geneva to exhibit himself before that august board as a petulant *nisi prius* lawyer, in order to win a little applause at home by contesting that which was already settled, and disputing the very right to exist of the tribunal on which he sate. In this case Mr. Adams, simply by sitting still and maintaining his dignity, won those

impartial men to his side of every issue that his arrogant colleague raised. Herein Sir Alexander Cockburn showed the same talents and the same disingenuousness with which he had supported Lord Palmerston in his insolence to Greece in 1850.

Mr. Adams returned from Geneva with renewed claims to his countrymen's gratitude. His course there had excited their profound admiration, and even in his absence his name had been very prominently placed as a candidate for the Presidency before an independent convention dissatisfied with both the great parties. The attempt failed; and I should never dream at this hour of reviving the controversies of 1872. But in so far as Mr. Adams's own character affected his chances of a nomination, — one cannot help saying, of an elec-

tion,—it is our duty to consider it a moment. He failed then, because he was thought not sufficiently the man of the people. And some will think that when we have said this we have said enough; that he stands in the wrong. Fellow-citizens, let us not be carried away by any such hasty judgment; let us not be cajoled by favorite formulas into a condemnation or even a criticism of our friend's character. It may be that Mr. Adams was not in 1872, it may be that he was not at any time of life what we call the man of the people,—the man that the average impulse of the population of the United States turns to as representing its own state of mind. It may be that he disregarded, or rather that he never thought of that process which is by some called conciliation, and by others flattery, for winning

the mysterious thing called popular favor. Hence he was subjected in his lifetime, hence he will probably be always subjected, as long as his name is remembered, to charges of being cold and aristocratic. Hence, when his name was mentioned for high office, even those who admitted his entire fitness were disposed to reject him for some with whom they had exchanged more handshakes and repartees,—men more richly provided with commonplace phrases suited to the hour; men more ready to forward petitions for office to Washington; men more eager to intimate that they should wait to know their constituents' opinions before presuming to have any of their own.

In such charges and attacks there is an admitted element of truth; and there is a superimposed mass of absurdity, which it is

not worth while to call falsehood. Mr. Adams was thoroughly and entirely an American,—a man of the republic. He believed in the government founded by the fathers when they cut themselves off from Britain and her crown, once and forever. To say that he felt a leaning towards a return to monarchy, or an aristocratic remodelling of our constitution, is an insult to common-sense. He believed the people to be the source and the only source of power; and he always accepted power as a trust from them. But then if he took it, he took it as a trust; he demanded the absolute confidence of the men who elected or appointed him. If they thought him fit for high posts, he must administer them in his own way; he must be trusted entirely, or not at all. And to him "the people" meant nothing

less than the whole nation. He never would agree to dignify by that high name a portion only,—a body of men in whom the national conscience, the national traditions, the national honor, above all the deliberate national conviction is wanting; who, by catching hold of some favorable handle of passion or profit or prejudice or whim,—and all such emotions he believed a nation might feel as well as a person,—who, catching hold of such things, I say, swing themselves to the top of the political pole, and chatter, “We are the people! come and court our favor, or we will push you down.” He turned away from such pretenders in undisguised contempt, waiting till the real people could hear him: and he did not, he shall not, wait in vain!

But he was cold; he was not genial; he

did not call one at once by name, and ask one to his house! There is truth in the charge. He did not have the contagious enthusiasm of his grandfather, the winning charm of Clay, the captivating geniality of Webster. He was not a magnetic man. His father said of him that he was born to be a hermit. Nor was he a fluent talker in private, nor a silver-tongued orator in public. Undoubtedly those who were drawn into his intimate circle regretted, as did the outside world, the absence of a more effusive expression of his feelings. And why did they regret it? Because they knew that this reserve did wrong to himself far more than to others; because they knew that his natural temper was as warm as his father's or his grandfather's. They knew that though the fire of his disposition was not for sale on the

end of every stick, it was burning under that calm face as strong and as consuming as the volcano under the snows of Cotopaxi. The mountain peak might seem cold and distant; but when the hour came for the concealed flames to leap forth,—in the bosom of his family, at the call of deserving charity, under the sting of a mighty wrong, at the note of a great cause,—there was no reason to complain of sluggishness or want of ardor. And if it has indeed come to this, that the people will not believe any one fit for the chair of the elder Adamses except those who, rejecting their example, prefer to be hail-fellow well-met with every one who claims their regard, why, then we may cheerfully allow that Mr. Adams would have made a thoroughly unpopular President. He said himself at the time, he should have been “a

President without a party, engaged to wage a stern and hopeless conflict with the powerful champions of all existing abuses," — although, since John Quincy Adams was rejected for a second term, one might be disposed to think that many of his successors would have done well to substitute something of his stern discourtesy to intrigue for the more favorite sweetness of address, so charming and so poisonous.

Whatever the cause, Mr. Adams was set aside as a presidential candidate in 1872; nor was an attempt to nominate him for Governor of Massachusetts in 1875 more successful. He received this nomination afterwards from a party with which he never had acted, and which sought the strength of his name from the motives of the hour; but the compliment was a barren one. He wanted

neither post. He had the retirement that he wished. He found never-failing interest in his family, in his town, and in the mass of papers he had inherited, from which he had prepared those invaluable manuals for statesmen, his grandfather's works and his father's diary. In 1870 he secured the erection of the building for our Academy, founded by his grandfather in 1823, and took great and kindly interest in the opening of the school, which is the only public object to receive a bequest in his will.

At this period Mr. Adams was frequently called upon for public addresses; and on one such occasion drew from him a discourse which has subjected him to very undeserved criticism. He was invited by the State of New York to deliver a eulogy on his friend and chief, Governor Seward. Mr. Adams, as

I have said, had long admired and trusted Mr. Seward as a statesman of lofty and profound views, and felt that scanty justice had been done to his services in the war. Accordingly, he gave full utterance to his feelings, in an address that seemed to many to detract from that absolute reverence for Mr. Lincoln which it was esteemed a religious duty to render. It was said that Mr. Adams's absence in Europe, and his closer intercourse with Mr. Seward had made him ignorant of matters here from 1861 to 1865. Mr. Adams was not exactly in the habit of writing about subjects of which he was ignorant; but without entering into an instant's controversy, I simply refer you to the oration itself; and I am convinced you will find, if you have never read it before, that Mr. Adams's insight into the real strength and

weakness of Mr. Lincoln's cabinet which employed him is a good deal deeper than that of his critics.

As his life advanced, a gentle shadow began to steal over his mind. He began more and more to retire from all intercourse with the world outside, never losing his un-failing courtesy to all who came near him. It was very touching to me, on the last bright summer's day that I saw him, to notice him recall a familiar old Quincy name that had failed to catch the ear at his side. Gently, very gently, the burden of life slipped from his shoulders, and the call came at the resurrection hour, in the early morning of Sunday, the 21st of November, 1886.

And now, fellow-citizens, to this sketch, tedious I fear, needs there to be added any

artful analysis of character,' any flowing summary of achievements? Simplicity and dignity, a trained intellect and a dauntless energy, a lofty aim and a pure conscience, an honored name adorned with new lustre all his own, an eventful career as absolutely free from any hint of corruption, of intrigue, of duplicity or self-seeking, as the spotless planet that for the last three months has glorified our western sky, — this was Charles Francis Adams. Born to an inheritance of something more than honor, he would have been content with cultivated and domestic quiet; called to take a part in public life, he accepted the call in perfect simplicity, and discharged it in perfect fidelity; startled by the progress of what he thought pernicious designs in the ranks of his own party, he uttered successively his argument, his appeal,

his protest, and then withdrew. Again called out,—for he was needed,—he rose at once from the rank of a gallant ally to the loftier rank of a dignified arbiter; called to higher and more arduous duties still, he made his country an eternal debtor to his memory; and at a time when hundreds and thousands of her noblest sons were giving everything, even to their lives, to save hers, he performed a part second to none in that sacred task; called to crown his own act in happier times, he was as ready at sixty as at fifty to cross the ocean in order that what the country said must be done, should be done well. Did he not fulfil the duties of a son to such sires? Did he not perform to the utmost whatever his fellow-citizens saw fit to ask? Did not his work show capacity, if Providence had so willed it, for tasks higher

still? And is his bust not worthy to be set in this house, to stir the heart of the child and the pilgrim, the American and the foreigner, by the side of these whom his name and his town gave to America, — the fit peer of all her noblest sons?

Ay, in this very temple. He loved to come here. He loved to frequent the house of God always. It was his never-failing weekly resort. Religion was not merely the daily practice of his home, it was the centre of his life. God and Christ, the Church and the Bible, were no mere names to him, nor matters merely of evidence or conviction or faith, or even of experience, but were embodied in his being. He asked no other guide, nor staff, nor torch. He would not have thanked any one for shaking the religion that he learned as a child from his

parents,—and from whom could he have learned it better? Here was his comfort in all his cares, his support in all his troubles. And as we conclude this solemn public service, with deep gratitude that we were allowed to call such a man our own, let us realize that all the honors accorded by his countrymen, all the esteem wrung from his antagonists, all the confidence of his townsmen, even all the love of his household, were less in his mind than the voice to which his ear has ere now been opened, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!”



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